



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

[Handwritten signature]

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/784,068	02/16/2001	Ronald Keith Dobes	202385US8	4878
22850	7590	05/13/2004		
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			EXAMINER ZHONG, CHAD	
			ART UNIT 2154	PAPER NUMBER
DATE MAILED: 05/13/2004				

[Handwritten number 7]

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/784,068

Applicant(s)

DOBES ET AL.

Examiner

Chad Zhong

Art Unit

2154

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 February 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Art Unit: 2154

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1 – 26 are presented for examination.
2. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:
pg 36, line 10, S1404 should be changed to S1405.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371 (c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

4. Claims 7-8, 10, 12, 14, 20-21, 23 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Bahlmann, US 6,487,594.
5. As per claim 7, Bahlmann teaches a method for supplementing subscribership for data services of a service provider that provides at least one of CATV services and data services in first geographic area, comprising the steps of:

obtaining a contract from the service provider to provide data services for an end-user, the end-user located outside of the first geographic area;

provisioning the end-user for data services; storing an end-user entry in a database corresponding to the end-user;

associating the end-user entry with the service provider in the database; and connecting the end-user to a communication line operated by the service provider via a high speed data network (Col. 3, lines 5-25).

6. As per claim 8, Bahlmann teaches the method of claim 7, wherein the communications line operated by the service provider is connected to a headend through which at least one of CATV signals and data signals are transmitted (Col. 3, lines 5-25, lines 30-37).

7. As per claim 10, Bahlmann teaches a method for expanding customer bases for data services providers, comprising the steps of:

executing a subscription contract between a third party and a first data service provider to connect a first end-user to a high-speed network dedicated to broadband data transport services operated by the third party;

executing another subscription contract between the third party and a second data service provider to connect a second end-user to the high-speed network; connecting the first end-user to a headend of the first data service provider through a common data center of the high-speed network; and

connecting the second end-user to a headend of the second data service provider through the common data center of the high-speed network (Col. 3, lines 5-25).

8. As per claim 12, Bahlmann teaches a method for reusing computer resources to provide operations support services to a plurality of Internet service providers with different customer bases, comprising the steps of:

populating a digital repository with entries including information about end-users of a first Internet service provider; populating the digital repository with entries including information about end-users of a second Internet service provider, the second Internet service provider being different from the first Internet service provider;

presenting a graphical user interface to the first Internet service provider when seeking to at least one of access, create, and update the information about end-users of the first Internet service provider; and

presenting the graphical user interface to the second Internet service provider when seeking to at least

Art Unit: 2154

one of access, create, and

update the information about end-users of the second Internet service provider (Col. 3, lines 5-25).

9. As per claim 14, Bahlmann teaches a method for promoting competition between cable providers offering broadband data services, comprising steps of:

connecting an end-user to a high-speed data network dedicated to broadband data transport services; connecting a headend of a first broadband data services provider to the high-speed data network so as to create a physical communication link between the end user and the headend of the first broadband data services provider;

connecting a headend of a second broadband data service provider to the high speed data network so as to create another physical communication link between the end user and the headend of the second broadband data services provider; and

determining if the end-user selects to subscribe to data services offered by one of the first broadband data services provider and the data services offered by the second broadband data services provider;

enabling the physical communication link between the end-user and the first broadband data services provider if in the determining step it is determined that the end-user selects the data services of the first broadband data services provider; and

enabling the physical communication link between the end-user and the second broadband data services provider if in the determining step it is determined that the end-user selects the data services of the second broadband data services provider (Col. 3, lines 5-25; Col. 4, lines 18-22).

10. As per claim 20-21, claims 20-21 are rejected for the same reasons as rejection claims 7-8 above respectively.

11. As per claim 23 and 25, claims 23 and 25 are rejected for the same reasons as rejection to claims

Art Unit: 2154

12 and 14 above respectively.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

12. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

13. Claims 1-6, 9, 11, 13, 15, 16-19, 22, 24, and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bahlaman, US 6,487,594, in view of 'Official Notice'.

14. As per claim 1, Bahlmann teaches a method for expanding customer bases for data services providers, comprising the steps of:

connecting a first end-user of a first data services provider to a high-speed network dedicated to broadband data transport services (Col. 3, lines 30-36),

connecting a second end-user of a second data services provider to the high-speed network;
connecting the first end-user to a headend of the first data services provider through a common data center of the high-speed network (Col. 3, lines 5-25; Col. 4, lines 18-22, lines 35-44); and

connecting the second end-user to a headend of the second data services provider through the common data center of the high-speed network, wherein the high-speed network is owned by a third party, not the first data services provider and not the second data services provider (Col. 2, lines 10-24, lines 30-39; Col. 3, lines 5-25).

15. Bahlmann does not teach the high-speed network being at least one of a hybrid fiber optic coaxial network and an all-fiber optic network. However, "Official Notice" is taken that the concept and advantages of providing for a hybrid fiber co-axial network for transportation purposes is well known and

Art Unit: 2154

expected in the art. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include a portion of common network is a hybrid coaxial network with Bahalman because it would provide for faster and greater range of transportation.

16. As per claim 2, Bahlmann teaches the method of claim 1, wherein the first end-user is geographically located outside of a peripheral reach of a communications plant operated by the first data services provider, the communications plant being at least one of a hybrid fiber optic coaxial network and an all-fiber optic network (Col. 2, lines 1-24).

17. As per claim 3, Bahlmann teaches the method of claim 1, wherein the headend of the first data services provider is a headend for at least one of CATV signals and data (Col. 3, lines 5-25, lines 30-37).

18. As per claim 4, Bahlmann does not teach the method of claim 2, wherein:
the communications plant operated by the first data services provider carry CATV signals; and
the peripheral reach of the communications plant is restricted by a governmental regulatory authority.
However, "Official Notice" is taken that the concept and advantages of providing for a providing CATV signals in cable wires and governmental regulation of the telecommunications industry is well known and expected in the art. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include
the communications plant operated by the first data services provider carry CATV signals; and
the peripheral reach of the communications plant is restricted by a governmental regulatory authority
with Bahalman because it would provide for additional cable TV services as well as regulatory authority to regulate bandwidth and spectrum within the coaxial wire.

19. As per claim 5, Bahlmann does not teach the method of claim 4, wherein the communications plant carries CATV signals to other end-users, but not the first end-user. However, "Official Notice" is taken that the concept and advantages of providing for a selective programming/services within the cable

Art Unit: 2154

network is well known and expected in the art. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include carrying CATV signals to only particular end-users with Bahalman because it would provide for variety of services for the end user, allowing end users to be able to select their individual monthly cable TV plans.

20. As per claim 6 Bahlmann teaches the method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

storing a first end-user entry in a database of the common data center corresponding to the first end-user;

associating the first end-user entry with the first data services provider in the database;

storing a second end-user entry in the database of the common data center corresponding to the second end-user; and

associating the second end-user entry with the second data services provider in the database (Col. 3, lines 5-25; Col. 4, lines 19-22).

21. As per claim 9, Claim 9 is rejected for the same reasons as rejection to claim 4 above.

22. As per claim 11, Bahlmann does not explicitly teach the method of claim 10, wherein at least one of the first data service provider and the second data service provider also provide cable television signals to communication lines connected to their respective headends. However, "Official Notice" is taken that the concept and advantages of providing for a selective programming/services within the cable network is well known and expected in the art. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include carrying CATV signals end-users with Bahalman because it would provide for variety of services for the end user, allowing end users to be able to select their individual monthly cable TV plans.

23. As per claim 13, Claim 13 is rejected for the same reasons as rejection to claim 5 above.

Art Unit: 2154

24. As per claim 15, Claim 15 is rejected for the same reasons as rejection to claim 5 above.
25. As per claims 16-19, Claims 16-19 are rejected for the same reasons as rejection to claims 1-3 and 6 above respectively.
26. As per claims 22, 24 and 26, Claims 22, 24, and 26 are rejected for the same reasons as rejection to claims 9, 5 and 15 above respectively.

Conclusion

27. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The following patents and publications are cited to further show the state of the art with respect to "METHOD AND SYSTEM OF EXPANDING A CUSTOMER BASE OF A DATA SERVICES PROVIDER".

- i. US 5953389 Pruett et al.
- ii. US 5091713 Lechleider et al.
- iii. "Vendors unify system tools" Leon, Mark Infoworld Dec 18, 1995. Vol. 17, Iss. 51;
- iv. "The help desk market: disarray and disrepair", Hecht, Bradley Datamation Dec 1996.
- v. "LODE, a system for learning kernel knowledge bases from databases", March, 1987, Rowland et al.
- vi. "Net management from an alarming point of view", Kiernan, March 1991

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Chad Zhong whose telephone number is (703) 305-0718. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7am-4:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John A Follansbee can be reached on 703-305-8498. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this

Application/Control Number: 09/784,068

Page 9

Art Unit: 2154

application or proceeding is assigned are 703-746-7239 for regular communications and 703-746-7238 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3900.

CZ

May 10, 2004



JOHN FOLLANSBEE
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100